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Application Number: 09/766,149

Fax To: Commissioner for Patents
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Attention: Dave A Ghatt, Examiner
Application #: 09/766,149
Filing date: 01/18/2001
Art Unit: 2854

From: PARKINSON, John Victor, Applicant

Herewith: Pages 1-4 and
Claims 47-53 on two pages, for a total of 6 sheets.

Response to Office Action dated 06/07/2004.

Elections/Restrictions

Re: Paragraph 1

Applicant intends to file one or more divisional applications with respect to claims 1-5 and/or 12-46.

Claim rejections - 35 USC § 112

Re: Paragraph 4

Claim 10 is withdrawn.

Claim rejections - 35 USC § 102

Re: Paragraph 6.

The Report states that claims 6-9 and 11 are anticipated by Shelton. These claims have been amended and renumbered as 47-53. The amended set of claims is attached.

The Report continues, "With respect to claims 6 and 11 ..." but the comments that

follow in the Report only apply to claim 6, not to claim 11. Claim 11 is dealt with below.

Claim 6, renumbered as 47, is amended for clarification and to narrow the scope as follows:

Claim 47. A keyboard having typing keys arranged in such a way as to provide key arrangement means that provides the user with a choice of different convenient methods of operation for the typing of at least ten different characters while the hands remain substantially in home position.

This distinguishes over Shelton who provides duplicate keys for some common characters but does not provide different methods for at least ten characters.

Claim 7, renumbered as 48, is rewritten for clarification as follows:

48. The keyboard of claim 47, wherein said key arrangement means provides the choice of typing said at least ten different characters either on keys assigned to those characters, or on keys normally assigned to other characters, for example, the choice of typing numerals either on a row of numeral keys, or by shift-selecting them on a row of letter keys.

While Shelton does allow the typing of either uppercase or lowercase 'A' using different 'A' keys and the shift key, in either case the 'A' key is a designated 'A' key, and not a key normally assigned to another character as required by claim 48.

With respect to claims 8-9 the Report states that Shelton has "shift key (UC, IC) conveniently positioned for operation by either thumb or an index finger", and "to allow shift-selected characters to be typed using one digit on each hand, or two digits on one hand."

These claims are rewritten and renumbered as 49-52 as follows:

49. The keyboard of claim 47, wherein said key arrangement means provides the user with the choice of conveniently operating at least one shift key with either a thumb or an index finger while the hands remain substantially in home position.

50. The keyboard of claim 49, wherein said key arrangement means provides the user

with the choice of conveniently selecting at least two different shift functions with either a thumb or an index finger while the hands remain substantially in home position.

51. The keyboard of claim 49, wherein said key arrangement means provides the user with the choice of conveniently selecting at least three different shift functions with either a thumb or an index finger while the hands remain substantially in home position.

With regard to operating shifts with thumb or index finger, note that Shelton states (column 4, line 50-56) that shift keys UC, IC are operated by the left little finger. Also, they could not be reached by a thumb or by an index finger with the hands substantially in home position as required in my amended claims.

52. The keyboard of claim 47, wherein said key arrangement means provides the user with the choice of conveniently using either one hand or two for typing shift-character combinations using the usual finger for each character, while the hands remain substantially in home position.

Since Shelton uses the little finger for the shifts and the little finger also types characters,, the usual finger could not be used for one-handed shift-character combinations, and such combinations would be inconvenient or impossible with the hands in home position.

Claim 11, renumbered as 53, is rewritten for clarification as follows.

53. The keyboard of claim 47, wherein said key arrangement means provides the choice of selecting alternative configurations of the columns of keys assigned to particular fingers, for example, selecting asymmetrical columns of keys all leaning to the left for one method of typing characters, or selecting symmetrical columns of keys all leaning inwards for a different method of typing the same characters.

Applicant believes this choice to be so unique as to have no close prior art for comparison. Where electronic or software switching makes it easy to re-arrange the characters

on the keys, there has been no easy way to re-arrange the physical layout of the keys, and thus no practicable way to produce an effective dual-standard keyboard. This concept resolves that long-standing problem.

Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claims attached herewith now meet the criteria for patentability.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John V. Parkin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "P".

September 5, 2004